

Rhode Island Energy to receive \$50M in federal funding to modernize grid

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Rhode Island Energy is slated to receive up to \$50 million in federal funding over five years to modernize Rhode Island's electric system.

Rhode Island Energy was one of 34 proposals selected by the Department of Energy (DOE) out of over 300 submitted for this federal funding opportunity through the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) program made possible by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

In its proposal, called Smart Grid for Smart Decarbonization, Rhode Island Energy proposed integrating a variety of advanced technologies to improve visibility and control of the electric grid, strengthen reliability, reduce infrastructure costs, integrate increased renewable energy resources into the grid.

"In our journey towards a carbon-neutral future, as we incorporate more renewable energy into our system and embrace electric vehicles on our roads, it's imperative that our grid evolves accordingly," Rhode Island Gov. Dan McKee said. "This funding from the U.S. Department of Energy will go a long way toward supporting this essential upgrade. We extend our gratitude to our congressional delegation and RI Energy for their diligent efforts in making this grant a reality."

Among the advanced technologies included for support from federal funding are information technology, software, and smart field devices that connect directly to the electric grid.

"Clean, distributed energy resources and strategic electrification are necessary to mitigate climate change. At the same time, they can create new operational complexities for utilities across the country," Dave Bonenberger, president of Rhode Island Energy, said. "This federal funding will help us invest in a strong, reliable electric backbone that is capable of supporting smart and affordable decarbonization in the Ocean State."

Bonenberger added that advancing the electric grid is one piece of the company's strategy to control long-term costs to operate and maintain the electric system.

"Other pieces of this strategy include our rollout of recently approved advanced meters, which will save on operational costs while providing more value to customers. Together, these are critical initiatives that will improve Rhode Island's electrical system for future generations, and we're grateful to state leaders and the Congressional delegation for their continued leadership in supporting federal funding opportunities to decrease customer costs," Bonenberger said.

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The preliminary selection does not guarantee funding. Over the next several months, Rhode Island Energy will work with the DOE's Grid Deployment Office to clarify details of its plan to secure the award.

Rhode Island Energy provides energy to over 770,000 customers across Rhode Island through the delivery of electricity or natural gas. It is part of the PPL Corp. family of companies.

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